

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 QUITO 06269 01 OF 02 081849Z
ACTION ARA-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
ACDA-12 IO-13 AID-05 EUR-12 HA-05 MCT-02 EB-08
TRSE-00 /126 W
-----024345 081932Z /40

P R 081712Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY QUITO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9333
INFO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 QUITO 6269

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, EC
SUBJECT: SENIOR FONOFF OFFICIAL DISCUSSES ANDEAN WAR
POSSIBILITIES

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: ACTING FOREIGN UNDERSECRETARY TOLD EMBOFF
THAT CURRENT VISIT TO ECUADOR BY PERU'S NAVY MINISTER IS NOT
WITHOUT ITS DANGERS. HE ALSO REVEALED THAT ECUADOREAN
INTELLIGENCE INDICATED POSSIBILITY OF ARGENTINE OCCUPATION
OF BEAGLE STRAIT ISLANDS NEXT MONTH AND SPECUALTED THAT PERU
AND BOLIVIA MIGHT TAKE ADVANTAGE OF CHILE'S SOUTHERN PROBLEM
TO OCCUPY NORTHERN CHILE. HE PERCEIVED SOME RISK TO ECUADOR
IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING CONVERSATION WITH POLCOUNS ON SEPTEMBER 6, ACTING
FOREIGN UNDERSECTETARY HERNAN VEINTIMILLA COMMENTED ON CURRENT
VISIT OF PERUVIAN NAVY MINISTER ADMIRAL JORGE PARODI AND
LAUNCHED INTO MORE GENERAL DISCUSSION OF POSSIBILITIES FOR WAR
IN THE ANDEAN SUB-REGION.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 QUITO 06269 01 OF 02 081849Z

3. VEINTIMILLA DECLARED THAT THE GOE WAS AMBIVALENT TOWARD
THE VISIT OF ADMIRAL PARODI, NOTING THAT WHILE IT HAD SOME
OBVIOUS POSITIVE BENEFITS, THE GOE WAS NOT WITHOUT ITS
MISGIVINGS. HE CHARACTERIZED PARODI AS A MODERATE AMONG THE
PERUVIAN MILITARY WHO HAS ENJOYED EXCELLENT PERSONAL
RELATIONS WITH PRESIDENT POVEDA, CHIEF OF JOINT COMMAND

OLMEDO AND OTHERS IN THE ECUADOREAN HIGH COMMAND. ECUADOR BELIEVES THAT PARODI HAS PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN RESTRAINING MORE AGGRESSIVE PERUVIAN ELEMENTS IN THEIR ATTITUDES TOWARD ECUADOR OVER THE LAST EIGHTEEN MONTHS. ON THE OTHER HAND, PERU HAS A HISTORY OF EXPLOITING SUCH VISITS FOR ITS OWN QUESTIONABLE PURPOSE. FOR INSTANCE, PERU CAN POINT TO SUCH VISITS AS EVIDENCE THAT THE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP IS WITHOUT DIFFICULTIES AND THEN BLAME ECUADOR FOR CREATING PROBLEMS ON THE BORDER, ETC. THIS IS DIFFERENT FROM THE PERU-CHILE SITUATION WHERE A ROUGH MILITARY BALANCE EXISTS AND EXCHANGE OF VISITS CAN REDUCE TENSIONS. HOWEVER, PARODI'S VISIT WAS UNAVOIDABLE IN VIEW OF ADMIRAL OLMEDO'S VISIT TO PERU SEVERAL MONTHS BEFORE.

4. VEINTIMILLA EXPRESSED HIS CONCERN FOR THE ANDEAN SITUATION IN GENERAL AND POSSIBLE PERUVIAN DESIGNS ON ECUADOR IN PARTICULAR. HE SAID THAT CURRENT CONCERNS CENTERED AROUND THE BEAGLE STRAIT PROBLEM AND THE POSSIBILITY THAT AN OUTBREAK OF HOSTILITIES THERE WOULD CAUSE A CHAIN REACTION REACHING ECUADOR. ACCORDING TO ECUADOREAN INTELLIGENCE, THERE IS A STRONG POSSIBILITY THAT ARGENTINA WILL ATTEMPT TO OCCUPY THE DISPUTED ISLANDS IN OCTOBER IN A LIGHTNING ATTACK AND CONSOLIDATE ITS GAINS BEFORE ANY INTERNATIONAL BODY CAN MOVE. IF SO, BOLIVIA, FISHING IN TROUBLED WATERS AND TAKING ADVANTAGE OF CHILEAN ATTENTION
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 QUITO 06269 01 OF 02 081849Z

TO ITS PROBLEM WITH ARGENTINA, MIGHT TRY TO ESTABLISH ITS CORRIDOR TO THE SEA IN CHILEAN TERRITORY. VEINTIMILLA BELIEVES THAT PERU MIGHT BE COLLABORATING WITH BOLIVIA IN ORDER TO SET UP A STALKING HORSE FOR ITS OWN INVASION AND CONSOLIDATION OF TERRITORY LOST TO CHILE IN 1879. HE DID NOT THINK THAT PERU WOULD FIRE THE FIRST SHOT, BUT IT WOULD HOPE THAT ITS ASSISTANCE TO "POOR LITTLE BOLIVIA" WOULD ENNOBLE ITS EFFORT BEFORE WORLD OPINION.

5. SHOULD PERU START FIGHTING IN THE SOUTH, CONTINUED VEINTIMILLA, IT WOULD ALSO LOOK TO PROTECT ITS NORTHERN FLANK AS WELL. IT COULD SIMPLY SEAL OFF THE BORDER, OR TAKE A MORE SERIOUS STEP OF KNOCKING OUT MILITARY INSTALLATIONS. HE FELT THAT PERU MIGHT SUSPECT THAT ECUADOR HAD A MUTUAL SECURITY PACT WITH CHILE AND MIGHT ACT ON THAT BASIS. IN REALITY, VEINTIMILLA STATED, THERE WAS NO SUCH PACT, ALTHOUGH ONE HAD BEEN PROPOSED EARLIER WHICH THE FONOFF SHOT DOWN. HE ADDED THAT CHILE'S MILITARY WAS INTENT ON CREATING A WAR PSYCHOSIS AMONG THEIR ECUADOREAN COUNTERPARTS AND HAD PARTLY SUCCEEDED. THE FONOFF WAS CONVINCED, HE SAID, THAT CLOSE FRIENDSHIP WITH THE US, NOT AN ALLIANCE WITH CHILE, WAS ECUADOR'S BEST DETERRENT

AGAINST PERU AND FOR THIS REASON THE FONOFF HAD BEEN
LOBBYING HARD FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE VULCAN/CHAPARRAL
SYSTEM OVER ITS EUROPEAN COMPETITORS.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 QUITO 06269 02 OF 02 081852Z
ACTION ARA-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
ACDA-12 IO-13 AID-05 EUR-12 HA-05 MCT-02 EB-08
TRSE-00 /126 W

-----024548 081933Z /40

P R 081712Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY QUITO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9334
INFO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 QUITO 6269

6. VEINTIMILLA ALSO EXPRESSED SOME CONCERN OVER PERU'S
MILITARY COLLABORATION WITH ARGENTINA AIMRED AGAINST
CHILE, THE COMMON HYPOTHETICAL ENEMY. HE REVEALED THAT
GOE HAD A REPORT ALLEGING THAT PERU HAD SHIPPED SOME WAR
MATERIAL TO ARGENTINA IN THE LAST TWO MONTHS, INDICATIVE OF
SOME SORT OF COLLUSION. HE OBSERVED THAT ARGENTINA WAS VERY
INFLUENTIAL WITH PERU AND THAT THIS HAD BEEN A POSITIVE
FACTOR IN ECUADOR'S SECURITY PICTURE UP UNTIL NOW BECAUSE OF
THE CLOSE RELATIONSHIP THAT THE ECUADOR HIGH COMMAND HAD
FORMED WITH ARGENTINA'S ADMIRAL MASSERA. HOWEVER, WITH
MASSERA'S PROXIMATE DEPARTURE AND HIS REPLACEMENT BY
SOMEONE WHO WAS MORE PRO-PERU, ECUADOR WAS CONCERNED.

7. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH GOE INTELLIGENCE GATHERING CAPABILITY
IS QUESTIONABLE, THE INFORMATION AND ESTIMATES SUPPLIED
BY VEINTIMILLA ARE WORTH DIGESTING AT LEAST AS INDICATIONS
OF THE ECUADOREAN MIND AT THE MOMENT. VEINTIMILLA'S APPRAISAL
OF WAR POSSIBILITIES DIFFERS FROM THE CONVENTIONAL
MILITARY/CIVILIAN ESTIMATE THAT WE ARE ACCUSTOMED TO
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 QUITO 06269 02 OF 02 081852Z

HEARING INASMUCH AS HE ASSIGNS ECUADOR SECONDARY AND
CONTINGENT ROLE IN ANY PERUVIAN ADVENTURE RATHER THAN
CITING ECUADOR AS PERU'S PRINCIPAL TARGET BECAUSE OF
ITS OIL FIELDS.
GONZALEZ

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: WAR
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 sep 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978QUITO06269
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780366-1065
Format: TEL
From: QUITO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780988/aaaacuto.tel
Line Count: 179
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 96371054-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1503076
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SENIOR FONOFF OFFICIAL DISCUSSES ANDEAN WAR POSSIBILITIES
TAGS: PBOR, EC
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/96371054-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014